

REMARKS

Claims 64-75 are canceled in this paper. No claims are amended or added in this paper. Therefore, claims 1-63 and 76-79 are pending. Of these claims, claims 26-37 and 57-63 are non-elected claims, as explained further below. Accordingly, claims 1-25 and 38-56 are under active consideration.

In the outstanding Office Action, the Patent Office stated, in pertinent part, the following election of invention requirement:

Restriction is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 and 372:

This application contains the following inventions or groups of inventions which are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1

In accordance with 37 CFR 1.499, applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single invention to which the claims must be restricted.

Group I, claims 1-63 and 76-79, drawn to a heat transfer label.

Group II, claim(s) 64-75, drawn to a method of decorating an article.

In response to the foregoing restriction requirement, Applicants respectfully elect Group I, claims 1-63 and 76-79.

In addition to making the aforementioned election of invention requirement, the Patent Office also set forth, in pertinent part, the following election of species requirement:

This application contains claims directed to more than one species of the generic invention. These species are deemed to lack unity of invention because they are not so linked as to form a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1.

The species are as follows:

Species A for claims 1-25 and 38-56, the surface energy of the release coating is about 25 to 35 mN/m of which about 0.1-4 mN/m is polar surface energy.

Species B for claims 26-37 and 57-63, the carbon content of the release coating is about 90-99.9, and an oxygen content of about 0.1-10%.

Species C for claims 76-79, the release value of the release coating is about 70-350 g/inch.

Applicant is required, in reply to this action, to elect a single species to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. The reply must also identify the claims readable on the elected species, including any claims subsequently added. An argument that a claim is allowable or that all claims are generic is considered non-responsive unless accompanied by an election.

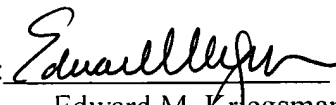
In response to the foregoing election of species requirement, Applicants respectfully elect Species A. Claims 1-25 and 38-56 are readable on the elected species.

If there are any fees due in connection with the filing of this paper that are not accounted for, the Examiner is authorized to charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 11-1755. If a fee is

required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 that is not accounted for already, such an extension of time is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

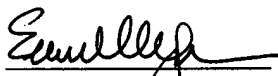
Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Non-Fee Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on February 23, 2004.


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Dated: February 23, 2004